

THE
DELICATE OBJECTION:
OR,
SENTIMENTAL SCRUPLE.

VOL. I.

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THE
DELICATE OBJECTION:
OR,
SENTIMENTAL SCRUPLE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

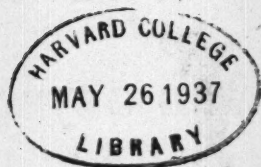
VOL. I.

Amor animi arbitrio sumitur, non ponitur.

SENECA.

L O N D O N:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE letters are genuine, they were written but recently, and the transaction therein mentioned have happened but very lately. The names alone are altered, but there is nothing taken from the dignity of the personages, they are in reality of the same rank, as is here ascribed to them.—The gentlemen under the names of Sir James Belmont and Francis Dalton, Esquire, are very distinguished members of the British Senate. The two principal

pal Ladies are living ornaments of their sex, and at present adorn the Court of St. James's. Captain *Tassel* still disgraces the army, and most of the other characters are at this time in being. My friend, whose real name I veil under the fictitious one of Sir James Belmont, lent me the manuscript for my private perusal. I thought the incidents surprising—many passages admirable—the diction nervous. Nature, in many of her intricacies, truly delineated, and the whole series of letters

letters pleasing. I entreated him to make them public. He replied I might do as I thought proper with them—he resigned them to me. I, accordingly, after just altering the names, introduce them to the public.

THE EDITOR.

letters pleading. I entreated him
to make them such. He re-
plied I might do as I thought pro-
per with them - he refused them
to me. I accordingly after that
showing the matter, presented
them to the printer.

THE EDITOR.

T H E

DELICATE OBJECTION.

L E T T E R I.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

London, —

WHILE you dream away your time in the country, I saunter away mine in the metropolis: it is amazing to me, that a man of your sense and education can possibly exist in

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fuch

such a sameness of scene, when the varieties of this *world in epitome* can scarce fill the circle of my amusement. It is a question, perhaps, worthy of your philosophical investigation, Why our souls should be so congenial, since our tempers are so different, and how a permanent friendship could be founded upon such a disparity of dispositions? but hold,—I'm growing too serious; I've started the thought, you may run it down if you please, or let it escape.

As, during absence, our ideas, frequently ramble after those we esteem,

I was

I was this morning employing my imagination about you.—

Being, precisely in the situation of those lazy mortals, whose spirits are too much revived to permit them to sleep, but are not sufficiently active to prompt them to leave their beds. In short, I was enjoying what may not be improperly termed, the *luxury of the pillow*, when fancy thus busied herself.

She presented you in a careless dress, seated under an old oak tree, which in times of yore, may, perhaps, have overshadowed some venerable Druid—

Plato on the immortality of the soul in your hand; your brows contracted to a frown, by the intenseness of your reading; but as Fancy is a *bonne vivante*, she placed a bottle of wine upon a clump of wood near your right-hand, with a sparkling glass of which you cleared every difficulty, and washed away all that appeared paradoxical in Monsieur Plato—the awful branches of the tree, protected you from the fierceness of the sun-beams, and compelled the shining God of Day to keep his distance, while the gentle Zephyrs whistled round your head, and took no further notice of you than now and then dis-

composing

composing a curl of your peruke. But to assist your meditations, just beneath your feet the *pious Hen was clucking to her young brood, and the bold Cock, in a shrill tone, proclaiming his own merits, and glorying in his prowess. At about three yards distance, the delightful prospect of a pig-stye was unfolded to the view, where the sow, in a *thorough bass*, instructed her progeny in music, while her notes were harmoniously imitated by the pigs, in a *squeaking treble*; in a profile view, a number of sheep were, with great significancy, staring at each other, while some of their compa-

* Gays Fables.

nions were most wisely employed in cropping the verdant herbage of the meadow. In a more distant ground, was seen

“ The lusty Bull ranging throughout the field,
 “ And from the herd singling his female out,
 “ T’enjoy her, and abandon her at will.”

As *Tom Otway* says, and in spite of all that *sentimental Critics*, may thro’ *false delicacy* advance to drive these lines from the Theatre, I say they are natural; what young fellow, in the spring-tide of life, and with liquid fire thrilling through every vein, but would wish to have the privilege of this happy animal? Is not the Grand Turk

Turk the Bull of Constantinople?
 The Seraglio is his field; he ranges
 through innumerable beauties, singles
 out his female, according to the pre-
 dominant whim, and then

——“enjoys her, and abandons her at will.”

I'll tell you what, *Belmont*, if ever I
 do change my religion, I'll turn *Ma-*
hometan:—You smile to hear a liber-
 tine talk about religion; enjoy the
 thought; I'm glad to contribute to
 your pleasantry at any rate, but I must
 insist that *Mahomet* was an excellent
 libertine *Prophet*, and knew how to
 make a most delicious *paradise*. And
 give me leave to say, that I myself
 B 4 should

should make no despicable *Bashaw*,
within the confines of a Seraglio.

I have no news to tell you, but
that there is to be a Masquerade in
the Hay-Market next week, at which
your humble servant intends to make
himself as ridiculous as his betters.

Since my affair with Miss *Dyson*,
there is a disagreeable vacancy upon
my hands, which frequently renders
me low spirited; we certainly do not
relish life, but when we *feel Love*. All
common amusements serve only the
purposes of dissipation, but give no
real pleasure; they may entertain, but
cannot

cannot enrapture; the *heart* requires not only to be exhilarated by trifles, but to flutter with extacy.

If *Aristotle*, and the rest of the worthy ancients will permit, I should be happy to hear of your welfare by the return of the post. I mean what respects your mortal part, as for your immortal moiety, I know it resides in private lodgings in the clouds, from whence it will hardly condescend to look down upon such an insignificant reptile, as

FRANK DALTON.

LETTER II.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

T O

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK,

Belmont Lodge.

ISHOU'D be infinitely pleas'd with your humour, if it favour'd less of libertinism; a sentiment may be at once fashionable and infamous. Wit may burnish, but cannot excuse folly, and time will bring on many bitter reflections

tions of having acted wrong when we knew better.

You say, “ *I dream away my time in the country.*” Why, Frank, life itself is nothing but a *dream*; therefore all our attention should tend to make it as pleasing a *dream* as possible; then consider the dream of a single night as an emblem of the full but fleeting dream of our existence. And you may easily infer, that a serene dream, where all is calm, easy, and quiet, is much more pleasing, and renders the dreamer by far more happy, than a stormy, wild, bustling dream, where the spirits are ever in a flutter,

the mind in continual agitation, and the whole frame discomposed. The serene dream is mine, the bustling dream yours.—Judge whose method of living is preferable, and which enjoys the greatest share of happiness.

Your question, “ Why our souls
 “ should be congenial, yet our dispositions different,” requires no investigation, because it is founded upon a wrong position ; our dispositions do not differ so much as you imagine : they are by nature essentially similar. Their apparent variation proceeds from local circumstances, and opposite pursuits ; my disposition by living a
 less

less dissipated life, is not quite so much warped as yours, your mind is clouded, and your affections tainted by the vapours of unbounded libertinism.

You say you are fond of variety. So am I; but with this difference in pursuing it: You seek it in squares, streets, lanes, alleys, and brothels; I follow it through fields, and meadows, up hills and down dales—in groves, woods and rural cots. You are desirous of finding it in the follies and conversation of rakes, fops, and prostitutes; I search for it in the opinion of the best writers, and in exercising

cising my imagination upon their sentiments.—Thus we are fond of the same thing, but pursue it by different paths.

In return for having drawn a picture of me, which I'll allow is not badly executed, I shall furnish you with a sketch of your manner of living in return.

Twelve o'clock at noon.

Methinks you are yawning in bed, between sleeping and waking—not certain whether it is yet quite time to rise—your visage pale and wan—your
looks

looks dull and heavy, your blood hot, your nerves relaxed, your hand trembling, and your head aching from the over-night's debauch. If you look back to yesterday, a group of follies present themselves to view, and make you hate yourself. If you look forward to the remainder of the present day, you can only perceive that you are likely to pass through it with an aching head, nauseating stomach, and disordered mind, which renders you so peevish that you are ready to hate every body about you.

I will now suppose you have passed through the fatigue of dressing, without

out any remaining spirits to comfort you, or one grateful reflection to give you satisfaction, you hurry to the Coffee-house, and envy every porter or carman you happen to meet, if they appear in more spirits than yourself: after you have sip'd a dish of coffee without relishing it, and hung over a newspaper for half an hour without reading it, your head-ach is encreas'd by the disputes of those pests of coffee-houses, called politicians, who are vociferously paying off the national debt without money; and settling quarrels that never existed between princes who never fell out—tir'd with their noise you again saunter into
the

the street, without knowing what to do with yourself; at length chance conducts you to an auction-room—where you bid for every article without being attentive to what they are—then having purchased some nick-knack you do not want, you make a present of it to some lady you do not know.—You are next accosted by some virtuoso, who requests your judgment and opinion upon an antique, (lately made) which in the abundance of his knowledge and wisdom, he has just thrown away his money to purchase, without having sense to discover the imposition. Being driven from the auction-room by the connoisseurs,

as you had been from the coffee-room by the politicians; you strole about absent in mind, and at the end of your reverie, find yourself in the Park. In half an hour's time, by oggling the ladies through your glass, and breathing the fresh air, your spirits begin to revive a little, and a small return of appetite conducts you to the tavern; where, encouraged by the favour of the choicest viands, and the relish of the most delicious fauces, you indulge an inclination to eat, half natural, and half artificial, till you have made a tolerable meal—then by the auxiliary aid of the bottle, you so far re-establish your spirits as to be able to bear yourself.

yourself.—It is now time to go to the play—the fide-box receives you, and some demi-rep, whose charms may yet lie in tolerable preservation, or whose external appearance is sufficiently gaudy to attract your notice, is indulg'd with those customary compliments which you think it necessary to pay in public places—to oblige her, you applaud those parts in the play which you disapprove, and not to disoblige the critics within hearing, politely damn those passages you really admire. The play over, you see her home, where by the provocative aid of an incentive supper, and inflammatory wines, you fancy you find charms in
her

her which she never possess'd, and seek for pleasure where it never can be found * * * * *

The next morning, you again rise with a trembling hand, and aching head; in short, much more disordered, much more criminal, and much less satisfied than the morning before.

* * * *

This is your perfect picture, and not only yours, but the picture of a numerous tribe of gentlemen in your favorite *metropolis*; and I hope I have not been so bad a painter as to be obliged to write Polite Libertine, or Fashionable Rake, at the bottom of the piece.

Such

Such is your life of pleasure; and a daily repetition of the same follies, the same fatigues, the same endeavours to destroy health, and shorten existence, all your boasted variety.

Allured by the fallacious appearance of pleasure, and seduced by the grossness of your appetites, which have been vitiated by the prevailing custom, and fashionable depravity of the times, well may you, with *Otway*, envy the Bull, when our passions are overborne by the savage depredations of lust, and our appetites depraved into beastly impurities, we repine at every restraint; we wish to be unboundedly
vicious,

vicious, and long to be as unrestrained as the brutes, that we may have an opportunity of being as brutish as they are free.

Misled by such delusions, and deceived by such partial and fallacious notions, you fancy the *Grand Signior* a very happy being; you imagine that he enjoys the very luxury of libertinism, and revels unbounded in the pleasures of love, but you are greatly mistaken. It is true, he enjoys the persons of the Ladies of the Seraglio, but cannot enjoy the mind, the most exquisite of all enjoyments. Nay, the partner, whom at any time
chance

chance or whim may direct him to, chuse, has not the permission to put even a negative upon his will, which article, trifling as it is, would sharpen his palled appetite, and encrease his pleasures; he consequently can never enjoy those delicious sensations, which spring from the tender cares, delightful assiduities, and soft solitudes incident to real love; in short, he never can feel those inexpressible raptures, known only to two delicate minds, actuated by a pure and reciprocal flame, where both the parties are free agents, or at least, under no dominion but that of the God of Love; he is often fatigued by the gross part of
the

the passion, but can never experience
the pure ethereal part, which alone
can give real blifs.

You will, perhaps, think me te-
dious; by the next post you shall
hear again from

BELMONT.

LET-

LETTER III.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

TO

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK,

Belmont Lodge.

I HAVE no doubt but you were greatly surprized at my last epistle, to hear a fellow declaiming in the praise of Love, who confesses he has never felt the passion, must appear strange: But the descriptions of love by the best poets, particularly the ancients, who copied immediately

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from

from Nature, enable me to judge tolerably of that subtle flame, which has burnt in all ages, and in every quarter of the globe. I judge of its ravages by its fierceness, of its pains by its pleasures, and of its influence by its power; not that I think the little blind God can ever be able to stimulate me to such absurdities, as I find, he has induced many to run into; if ever I should experience the passion, which, I think, will hardly ever happen, I will venture to affirm, that though Love may make me unhappy, it shall never render me ridiculous.

Neither

Neither do I think, though you have so often fancied yourself in love, that you have ever felt the passion in reality. Love is a stern goaler, and so extremely vigilant, that he lets none of his prisoners escape easily : all the chains which you pretend to have worn, have been broken with such facility, that I cannot think they were put on by *Cupid*. Then you must coincide with me, and confess, that roving in search of pleasure, prompted by imagination, stimulated by unruly passions, or rolling down the fashionable tide of dissipation, you have sometimes had *an attachment*, but never *felt a passion*, that to please

your fancy you have now and then entered into a voluntary bondage, which was easy in itself, and from which you could escape at pleasure.

But enough on a subject which is never likely to concern me, and which I believe, in reality, has never concerned you.

Adieu—I remain the same,

BELMONT.

LET.

LETTER IV.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

DEAR BELMONT,

London.

WITH all your gravity you are a philosophical Satirist—Deuce take your portrait of a town libertine, the colouring is rather high, but in the main, I must confess it just; however, I received it at a time when I was in the very situation it describes—Blood boiling, nerves relaxed, hand

C 3

shaking,

shaking, head aching, &c. And the description did not a little encrease my indisposition, for which I may thank my friend's cynical abilities.

I admit the truth of your reasonings, but do not think your apathy can conquer my ardor, or that your philosophical cold water can quench the fire of my unruly passions—Pshaw, I'm interrupted.

A profest sharper, Belmont, has waited on me to offer his services, and for a certain sum of money to instruct me in the nature of every *finesse* practised

practised in gaming of all kinds, and thus by a system of villainy to enable me both theoretically and practically to be as great a rogue as himself—but you know I detest gaming, by which fortune, health, happiness, reputation, and every thing that is dear, are staked upon a card or box of dice, and a man of honour levels himself with the meanest rascal.—I ordered my footman to kick the scoundrel down stairs.

I have been to the masquerade, where folly was exhibited in full bloom. There was the meanest little figure I ever saw, in the character of

shaking, head aching, &c. And the description did not a little encrease my indisposition, for which I may thank my friend's cynical abilities.

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I have been to the masquerade, where folly was exhibited in full bloom. There was the meanest little figure I ever saw, in the character of

Scanderberg the Great, who said nothing: a Sophy of Persia, who said a great deal to little purpose; an African Prince without a single slave to attend him, and a Great Mogul without any jewels to adorn him, or even French paste to give him a false splendor.

There was a celebrated Knight in the character of a dancing Bear, more clumsy, if possible, than the animal he attempted to personate, led by a certain Captain, well known on the turf at Newmarket, who might, with greater propriety, have appeared in the character of an Afs, a character suitable to his address and abilities; these
were

were attended by a fidler, whose music was, indeed, fit for nothing but the ear of brutes.

A well-known Demi-rep appeared in the character of a Vestal-virgin, and a backsliding Countess personated a chaste Roman Matron. Mr. P—— appeared in the character of Nobody, but took care to be in every body's way : the honourable Mr. F—— in the character of the Prodigal Son, was arrested by Mr. J——, who represented a Bailiff; however, he was bailed by J—— D—— for old acquaintance sake.

Lord H—— made an excellent Macheath. Lord D—— appeared as a Swindler, and the Earl of M—— informed the company that he had lately opened a bagnio, and was willing to oblige them to the utmost of his power.

A French Hair-dresser, who could not speak a word of the language, was very troublesome, till a fat English Cook taught him better manners.

There was a Roman Orator who stammered very much, and a Tar without a sea-phrase. In fine, there were so many characters improperly chosen,

chosen, and much worse supported, that I was heartily sick of the entertainment, nor do I think it any ways suitable to the Saturnine disposition of the English in general. Your humble servant appeared only in a domino, and many insignificant domino's did nothing but stare about them, and said nothing but *do you know me*. However, to make amends for all other impertinence, there was a Mask—and such a mask! such ease in her motions, such symmetry in her shape, such elegance in her manners, such a poignancy of wit, tempered with the most unaffected modesty in her replies—such—such—in short, such a

je ne ſcai quoi in her whole compoſition and deportment, that if her face, of which I could not obtain a ſight, is equal to the reſt of her, ſhe muſt certainly excel the goddeſs whom ſhe perſonated, for ſhe appeared in the character of *Diana*. There was a ſeemingly elder Maſk with her, in only a plain domino, who appeared to have great authority over her—this I apprehend to be either mother or aunt, for my imagination will paint the other as young as ſhe ſeemed charming; whatever her affinity to the lovely creature might be, ſhe watched her as narrowly as if ſhe feared the goddeſs
of

of chastity might make a slip in these regions of vanity and dissipation.

My affiduities alarmed them—while I was impertinently interrupted they made their escape, and eluded the vigilance with which I intended to discover who they were.

My heart has been in a flutter ever since—confound the puppies who occasioned my disappointment—what am I to think, Belmont? Am I in love with a person without seeing her face? who may be old, or ugly, for what I can tell—no—its impossible—she must be charming—my heart tells me so—

I

there

there is a sympathetic something within me, that suppresses every suggestion to her disadvantage. However, a little spice of your philosophy, if you please, upon the occasion, for it was never more wanted by

DALTON.

LET-

L E T T E R V .

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT
T O

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK, Belmont Lodge.—

INDEED, my libertine friend, it is my real opinion you are caught—fairly caught. In your former imaginary passions you could rally—you could be pleasant—nay, you could talk in the strain of ridicule upon the very object of your flame. These very reasons convinced me that you never really knew what it was to love—but
now

now you are serious, you are infected without knowing it—the symptoms are evident. *She is charming, your heart tells you so.* That heart of yours is a most intelligent composition—and that *sympathetic something* within you, which prevents you from being witty upon the occasion, which suppresses your customary vein of humour, informs me that you are much farther gone than you at present imagine, or than you ever were when you *blindly* mistook some less powerful deity for *blind Cupid*. I am therefore afraid that a *spice of my philosophy* will be useless; my *philosophical cold water* will not be sufficiently powerful to quench so unruly a flame.

You

You seem to doubt the possibility of falling in love with a person you never saw—there is no such miracle in the affair. We have examples, both ancient and modern, of a similar nature, particularly of a * lady and gentleman, who were separately confined in adjoining dungeons in the *Bastille*; they had never in their lives seen each other; but as distress is always ingenious, during their imprisonment had contrived to make a chink in the chimney, not visible to the keepers, nor would it admit them to look

* The Lives and Memoirs of these two extraordinary personages, who were lately released by order of the present French king, will, in a short time, be published by the Publisher of this Work.

through;

through; it served however for the sound of the voice to pass so articulately, that they could converse together, and condole with each other upon their mutual misfortunes; this melancholy consolation proved so agreeable to both parties, that it created in their breasts a reciprocal flame, which became so extremely violent, that, as they afterwards confess, they felt more pain in being kept separate from each other, than in their seclusion from the rest of the world; and would have been content to have ended their days in the same dungeon together, rather than have had their liberty, upon condition of being ever after

after disunited. The lady was first released—she left that horrible place with more regret than ever she entered it, on account of leaving behind, her dear Monsieur *De la Chapelle*; but she comforted herself and him with the agreeable hope of procuring, by some means, his enlargement. Her endeavours proved successful; her friends had exerted themselves with so much vigour, and she had been so strenuous in her representations in favour of the unfortunate gentleman, that he was dismissed from his confinement. The lady was far from handsome—the gentleman was advancing hastily towards the vale of life, and had but an indifferent

different person, yet the use of their eyes did not alter the sentiments of their hearts—their passion was as strong as ever. Their nuptials were soon after consummated, and *Hymen* waved his torch over a pair who became patterns of conjugal felicity. To this example we may add, that of our glorious and immortal *Milton*, who married after the loss of his eye-sight, and was immoderately fond of a consort he had never seen.

I allow that the eye is the principal avenue through which love makes his triumphant entry into the fortrefs of the heart—but love has many freaks ;
 he

he sometimes chuses a different path, and enters by a private passage where no one could have expected him: love has his whims, as well as other deities; at one time it is his pleasure to follow a particular propensity of his own; at another time he takes it into his head to surprize his votaries by some new manœuvre, or uncommon method of proceeding. Hence an Italian musician has sometimes been fortunate enough to shoot a lady through the heart with the sound of a fiddle; you'll allow, that in such a case the execution is done not through the eye, but the ear. We may, therefore, apply the words of the poet in a more
 general

general sense than he originally designed them.

“ No certain cause for love can be assign’d,
 “ ’Tis in no face—but in the lover’s mind.”

DRYDEN.

Though philosophy may, at present, prove ineffectual, yet a little precaution may be necessary ; I would, therefore, recommend a few hints to your serious consideration, and advise you, if you cannot immediately overcome this new passion, at least to moderate it, by reflecting, that it is a great chance if you ever find who this lady is, who thus, perhaps, providentially escaped your knowledge ; or if you should trace her out, she may
 prove

prove unworthy of an honourable attachment, and I hope you do not entertain an idea of any other. She may be already married, or not at her own disposal. In fine, there are innumerable reasons why you should strive to suppress this precipitate flame, and to overcome a pre-possession founded upon such uncertainties, and ambiguous circumstances.

BELMONT.

LET.

L E T T E R VI.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

London——

A Thousand things to tell you, Belmont—shall have no occasion for your philosophical assistance—am fixt—irrecoverably fixt. But I'll relate things in order, that I may be intelligible.

You know my fantastical aunt,
lady Coldstream; she hath thought
proper

proper to appoint me her heir after her death, in order to have the privilege of exercising my patience every day while she lives.

She has lately been bathing and drinking the waters at Brighthelmstone, and fancies they have done her so much good that she looks perfectly young again. She is never tired of viewing her own dear decayed charms in the glass, and I'm obliged politely to assure her they are in admirable preservation.

Her vanity is such, that she determined to become ridiculous upon can-

vass. Mr. Bronzure was ordered to exert his utmost abilities to do justice to her antique attractions, and I must needs attend her to the painter's house, to see the inimitable piece before the finishing stroke was put to it.

Mr. Bronzure had been so just, that I am afraid, though he is already an eminent painter, he will never be a fashionable one. Indeed he had copied nature faithfully, and given a striking likeness of my aunt as she really appears.

The old lady, for by the by she is near her grand climacteric, looked in
vain

vain for the vivacity of youth, and the roses of twenty.—

The picture was too honest—it did not flatter—the artist's inimitable skill had stolen from her haggard features the livid appearance of age, and his pencil had been remarkably minute in tracing those harsh wrinkles which art could not conceal, but which stubborn nature, in spite of every endeavour to the contrary, had displayed upon her brow, a brow that had stood almost sixty-three revolutions of the sun.

My aunt reddened with indignation—she ought to have done so when

she sat—the painter might have caught some additional sparks of life. She turned to the limner with fury—

“ Mr. Bronzure—I am astonished
“ that you should treat me in this
“ enormous manner!” (you know she
is passionately fond of high founding
words, and a theatrical manner of
expressing herself)——

“ Madam !”——

“ I say, Sir, you have used me
“ egregiously ill.”

“ With submission, Madam, I pre-
“ sume”——

“ Sir,

“ Sir, you cannot presume to say
 “ that is my likeness—’tis a palpable
 “ affront—I’ll assure you, Sir, I shall
 “ resent so glaring a piece of injustice
 “ —that a resemblance of me? O ye
 “ fates! it resembles no individual
 “ but a Laplander. Mr. Bronzure,
 “ I positively will never endure the
 “ sight of it.”

The painter perceived her frailty,
 and not being willing to affront her,
 determined to avail himself of it.

“ If your ladyship,” said he, “ does
 “ not approve of this endeavour, I’ll
 “ attempt to oblige you in a more

“ agreeable stile. This, madam, I’ll
 “ assure you, is not my *forte* ; and
 “ your ladyship should understand,
 “ that we painters, like poets, have
 “ our happy hours of composition
 “ and imitation. I must confess, at
 “ the time of my executing this piece,
 “ I was rather indisposed, and my
 “ imagination clouded ; I should not
 “ have finished it till my spirits were
 “ better adapted to make a perfect
 “ performance, but in strict obedience
 “ to your ladyship’s punctual com-
 “ mands, as you enjoined me dili-
 “ gence, and seemed to be desirous
 “ of my utmost expedition.”

My

My aunt was greatly mollified, when the cunning artist thus proceeded.—

“ I am willing to take the loss upon
“ myself, as this piece is not com-
“ plete enough to merit your lady-
“ ship’s attention. And I must con-
“ fess, though to my own disadvan-
“ tage, that it does not do justice to
“ those charms, which would be irre-
“ sistible in a *fancy stile*.”

Here my aunt blushed with pleasure, as much as she did before with indignation. O flattery, thou art the serpent that deludest womankind—the painter proceeded.—

D 4

“ If

“ If the *fancy stile* is agreeable to
 “ your ladyship, I think I could do
 “ myself the honour to give you the
 “ utmost satisfaction.”

“ Dear Mr. Bronzure, now you
 “ talk something like—now you make
 “ amends for all—do not think about
 “ the expence, you shall be no loser
 “ for your former inadvertency —
 “ ’twas a *faux-pas* in ——— but
 “ what character would suit me.”

“ What does your ladyship think
 “ of *Flora*—*Flora* would suit admira-
 “ bly with the elegance of your lady-
 “ ship’s features, and the dignity of
 “ your form.”

“ O de-

“ O delightfully—do, Mr. Bron-
 “ zure, go about it immediately—
 “ your imagination is propitious to-
 “ day—the idea is inimitable.”

“ Yes, *Flora* will perfectly suit
 “ your ladyship. You must be drawn
 “ in a free, disengaged manner, sit-
 “ ting upon a green bank, beneath
 “ a fine spreading tree in full bloom,
 “ a crown of flowers upon your head,
 “ upon the leaves of which the dew
 “ of spring shall sparkle in lieu of
 “ gems; on your right-hand, a shady
 “ arbour composed of jessamins, ho-
 “ ney-suckles, and other aromatic
 “ flowers which, by nature, love to
 D 5 “ creep

“ creep up, and embrace those rural
 “ retirements they adorn : on your
 “ left hand a meandring stream, the
 “ banks of which shall be embellished
 “ with those beautiful productions of
 “ nature that are at once lovely in
 “ stature, and charming in appear-
 “ ance. Within your view, a num-
 “ ber of beds shall unfold themselves
 “ to the eye, laid out in the most
 “ elegant taste, and enamelled by a
 “ variety of the most beautiful flow-
 “ ers.”

“ Charming fellow !—I am quite
 “ in raptures !—proceed.”

“ There

“ There remains nothing but the
 “ drapery, which I shall leave to the
 “ superior brilliancy of your lady-
 “ ship’s own fancy.”

Tired of such impertinence, I left
 her to the enjoyment of the extacies
 which the painter’s insinuations could
 inspire, or her own vanity digest, and
 strolled into another room full of
 paintings, which I perceived open.
 When—Heavens ! what opened to my
 view ? I beheld a glimpse of Para-
 dise.

You’ll excuse this rhapsody when I
 inform you, that I perceived, just

D 6

finished,

finished, the picture of a young lady in the character of *Diana* ; to all appearance designed for the very individual *Diana* I spoke to at the Masquerade—every part of the dress appeared the same—the symmetry and proportion were similar. Indeed the artist had been kinder than the young lady herself, for he had shewn, as far as he was capable of discovering, the wonders of her angelic countenance. She held the mask in her hand, and her head appeared in a tender, reclining posture—But such features ! Belmont, if I might judge, by painting, of perfection, they appeared to be such as would have saved *Apelles* the trouble of
of

of assembling the beauties of Greece, by their united charms to paint the *goddeſs of love*. He would here have found full employment for his utmoſt ſkill.

My aunt awakened me from my reverie, and drew me from the inanimate, but pleaſing ſhadow of what had ſo much employed my thoughts, and perturbed my heart. I could aſk no queſtions of the painter at this time—when I know more, you will be informed of it by

F. DALTON.

LET-

LETTER VII.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

London——

YOU may imagine I did not rest before I again saw Mr. Bronzure, to be relieved, if possible, from every shadow of doubt, and informed of the residence of my goddess.

The arch-dog, perceived that my heart was interested in the matter, by
the

the eagerness of my enquiries, and grew exceeding reserved accordingly.

I understood him—I directly offered him a bank note of fifty pounds; but would you think it, Belmont; he refused it.

Receiving money upon such an occasion, was a thing he did not understand; he could not answer it to his conscience—his conscience, Belmont! it was totally beyond his comprehension.

I found for all the precise rascal's circumlocution, that he wished to bite
at

at the bait, if it could be done with propriety. After a great deal of altercation, he agreed to accept the present, upon this condition, that I should have my picture drawn, which I was under the necessity of promising, before he would divulge the least hint. —Here's a fine fellow, Belmont, will not receive a bribe, but in the course of trade.

This weighty affair being adjusted, it produced the following piece of intelligence.—

That my charmer is the only daughter of a Sir John Grinly, who has

has an estate in Devonshire ; Sir John is a perfect Misanthrope, the necessities of life, he calls its superfluities ; the comforts, its blandishments ; and the amusements, its follies ; sometimes, in a fit of disgust, he will lock himself up for a month together ; let his beard grow the whole time ; live upon bread and water, and refuse himself the luxury of a bed, laying either upon the floor or carpet ; when he is weary of this whim, for he has a rotation of absurdities, he emerges from his chamber, gets shaved, becomes a little humanized ; but always, in the meridian of folly, pursues some new propensity that is equally ridiculous : if it rains violently,

violently, he chuses to take a walk ; but if it is a fine day he locks himself up in a dark study, thus really hating, or affecting to hate mankind, he has no other method of expressing his abhorrence, than in the whole tenor of his conduct, being of an opinion contrary to any that universally prevails, and acting diametrically opposite to the customs of the world ; thus, to indulge his beloved singularity, he lives an unsocial life, surrounded by multitudes, is miserable to himself, a plague to all about him ; the pity of some, the contempt of others, and the derision of the world in general.

His

His Lady is on the other extreme; she is passionately fond of pleasures, I mean, such as serve the purposes of dissipation, without being in themselves criminal. But not being deceived by vanity, like my aunt, into an opinion of still retaining her youth, she wishes to pursue her favorite amusements, and to partake of the various species of entertainment, which attract the gay and giddy of this metropolis, without appearing fond of them at an age when such pursuits must seem an impropriety. She hath, therefore, hit upon this expedient; she goes to operas, plays, masquerades, routs, drums, exhibitions, auctions; and in short,

short, answers every call of amusement, by which money, and time may be squandered away; but always takes her lovely daughter with her, pretending it is to indulge her only, that she seeks entertainments, of which she herself hath long since been tired.

Between such a couple, you may easily imagine there can be no great harmony subsisting; sentiments so different, and pursuits so opposite, can produce nothing but feuds and altercations; indeed, they scarce ever see each other but they disagree, and the result of such disagreement is always triumphal to the Lady; the lover of worldly

worldly pleasures, is sure to be too hard for the hater of mankind: and the modern Timon is compelled to submit, and lock himself up.

It is not at all surprizing, that such jarring tempers should come together: marriage is become as political as stock-jobbing, as mercenary as usury, and as commercial as the sale of silks.

—This was a match of interest, where sympathy of sentiment, simularity of disposition, or union of hearts, were never once thought of; it was made up by those, commonly called friends, but who, in such cases, are bitter enemies, since by their wisdom and prudence

dence they entail upon us misery for life.—Cupid was not present, Hymen was asleep, and the dull Priest alone officiated.

Such marriages in these times are common, and we may frequently see many, in splendid equipages,

“Who sigh, and are no Duchesses in heart.”

Though sprung from such an heterogeneous pair; my charmer is an epitome of perfections.—

Think not, my own imagination dictates this; it is Mr. Bronzure’s account: and he certainly must know something

something of her charms, since he so lately attempted to diffuse them on canvass;—his report does the same credit to her intellectuals.

Having gained this information, my next business must be to introduce myself; which, from the old Lady's disposition, I imagine, will be no difficult matter: the result of this design, when executed, will be immediately communicated by

F. DALTON.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

T O

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK,

Belmont Lodge.

I Heartily congratulate you on your success, in discovering your conquering incognita; and the accounts you have received in her favor: yet, be not too sanguine—I foresee in the disposition of the parents many difficulties; but *as none but the brave de-*

serve the fair; be just to be happy,
and be resolute to conquer.

I am going to take a journey, but
address me as usual; your letters will
be immediately forwarded to me. I
cannot, at present, be more particular;
but in a short time will be quite ex-
plicit; and perhaps, greatly surprize
you. Success attend you; and be-
lieve me to be,

Yours, &c.

BELMONT.

LETTER IX.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

London.—

I AM amazed at the meaning of your laconic epistle—some mystery is couched in your brevity. Be not reserved to your friend, when you are sensible he is entirely devoted to your service. I beg a few speedy and explicit lines, to put an end to the uncertainty of my conjectures.

I have

I have seen my *Diana*—she is indeed a goddess.

“ Grace is in all her steps, Heav’n in her eye,
“ In every gesture, dignity and love.”

She is, Belmont, beyond description charming!

“ Oh! she is more than painting can express,
“ Or youthful poets fancy when they love.”

Bronzure gave me private intelligence when the ladies were to call upon him to give orders for the picture’s being taken home.—

I flew on the wings of impatience,
and was at his house before them.

I waited—my heart in a flutter—a thousand ideas whirling round in my imagination.

The servant announced lady Grinly—she entered—a decent old lady enough. But her daughter—Belmont—her lovely daughter—broke upon my ravished sight, with such a profusion of charms, such an assemblage of beauties, that I was as much amazed, and as much dazzled with the splendor, as our primitive father, when the glorious blaze of the sun first saluted his opening eyes, and presented to his view the brightest object of the new creation.

They

They took a survey of the principal paintings in the artist's collection, when the young lady, in the remarks she made upon the several pieces, delivered such noble sentiments, with such a delicate modesty, couched such refined sense in the most unaffected phrases, and discovered such an exquisite taste, that my soul was in raptures—Oh, Belmont, she is an inestimable treasure—Her eyes are not brighter than her ideas, and together they excel all other gems.

I took great care to pay my court as assiduously to the mother, as the contemplation of the daughter's beauty

would permit. I was always of her opinion, applauded her taste, and insinuated myself into her good graces as far as the opportunity would allow.

I was in luck—the old lady was pleased with my assiduities, and blest me by an invitation to look in, as I past by her house.

But would you think it, Belmont, upon the mother's invitation the lovely daughter blushed—blushed like scarlet—and ten thousand crimson graces in a moment overspread her face and neck, and seemed to peep through a skin that just before appeared white as alabaster.

What

What am I to ascribe this to, Belmont ?

Must I place it to my own account —may I venture to imagine she has the least gleam of prepossession in my favour, and that the invitation gave her a secret satisfaction.

Alarmed she certainly was, but in what manner ?——

Down vanity ! down false, but pleasing deluder of the fluttering heart ! do not exalt my hopes, to plunge me afterwards into black despair.

She might think the invitation indiscreet, and blush for her parent's imprudence.——

But hold---why should I be ingenious in framing chimeras to torment myself.——

She is all that's lovely---I'll hope she may prove all that's kind.

I'll flatter myself with expectations of the best, the worst, when decreed, will too soon arrive.

Write, Belmont---encourage my passion---be a real friend to

F. DALTON.
LET-

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LETTER X.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

London—

I AM amazed at your neglectful
silence, or unfriendly reserve.

If I am too hasty in my judgment,
excuse me—Suspence is always severe.
Then assure me you are not dilatory
through declining friendship, or that
your silence is not occasioned by any
misfortune. Write at any rate, if

E 5

your

your letter is more laconic than your last.

I called yesterday at Sir John Grinly's, who resides in Berkley-square, agreeable to the invitation—I was admitted. My angel, if possible, looked more charming than the last time I saw her. She, by the command of the old lady, enchanted me with several tunes upon the harpsichord, which she accompanied by the harmony of her voice.

She touched the keys in so masterly a manner, and sung with such a delicate softness, that I began to fancy myself

myself in Paradise, listening to the melody of chaunting cherubims.

“ My head grew giddy with the dear delight.”

Oh she is a constellation of all that can brighten life, and render it desirable.

After being in heaven for better than an hour, I once more descended to the earth ; that is, I took my leave, as I perceived it necessary from some certain circumstances, in order to return home.

O, Belmont, you knew my heart better than I did myself. It never,

E. 6.

indeed,

indeed, received the shafts of real love before; the sentiments I entertained for women, prior to my knowledge of Miss Grinly, I now perceive were no more to compare to my present passion, than the glimmering of the hermit's midnight lamp, to the splendor of the glorious luminary of day.

Love has new created me. I could not entertain an impure thought of the adorable Miss Grinly; my libertinism is lost in the respectful awe with which she inspires me. Love has effected what your philosophy failed in; and now so far from having the least idea detached from my enslaver, I could

rove

rove through the fields of gallantry,
and defy the glances of the most celebrated toasts. There is not the least room for infidelity in the heart of

F. DALTON.

L E T.

LETTER XI.

FROM MRS. SUSANNAH DAWSON

TO

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

AN PLEASE YOUR HONOUR,

I AM defired by a young gentleman, who was a little while ago most barbarously murdered near our house, and has been light-headed, Lord help him, ever since, to let you know as how he expects to recover very soon, his wounds are in a fair way, only very bad yet; and he is quite easy in his mind,

mind, except fretting a little now and then. Her ladyship, God help her, who is one of the best hearts in the whole county, is main kind to him, and has ordered me, knowing what a sober, sedate, handy person I am, to attend him as a nurse; and, God knows, had I not been his nurse, he would have known but little of what will happen next Sunday; for though I say it, that should not say it, he could not have met with any person from the land's end to this place, who would be more tenderer, or more carefuller over him. Doctor Allwig attends him. He at first used to shake his head very much, which frightened
me

me out of my wits—as there is always a great deal of danger when doctor Allwig shakes his head—but now the doctor only nods his head, and looks as wise as you please : so there are great hopes, for nodding the head is a good sign in your learned doctors. As I suppose you are one of his comrades, I beg as how your worship's honour will direct your letter in answer to this, thus : To Mrs. Susannah Gruel, Nurse, at Lady Beamwell's, Beamwell-Hall, near Tiverton, Devon, Devonshire. So no more at present, but God give you health and grace, and preserve you.

I am yours, in all sisterly kindness,

And your humble servant,

SUSANNAH GRUEL.

LETTER XII.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

TO

MRS. SUSANNAH GRUEL.

GOOD MRS. GRUEL,

I AM extremely obliged to you for the favour of your kind epistle, and return you my sincere thanks for your tender care of my friend. I'll assure you, Sir James Belmont will liberally reward you for your trouble in this world, and I have no doubt but Heaven will reward you in the next, for Providence always provides a place in
Paradise,

Paradise, for those who have a feeling for their fellow-creatures in this life. However, I am very glad to hear that the gentleman, who you inform was *so barbarously murdered*, is in such a hopeful way of recovery, and so very likely to get over such an uncommon accident. With my respects, please to present him with the inclosed note, and believe me to be,

Dear Mrs. Gruel,

With the most brotherly love,

Your obliged humble servant,

FRANCIS DALTON.

THE

THE INCLOSED NOTE.

TO Sir JAMES BELMONT.

BELMONT,

I have been alarmed at the receipt of a most curious epistle from a Mrs. Gruel, who informs me she is your nurse, and that you lie dangerously ill at Beamwell-hall in Devonshire. As there are some terrifying circumstances, mixed with the truly ridiculous, I beg, if your health will permit, that you will explain the whole affair, or get some more intelligent person to write to me immediately, as the good, tender, careful Mrs. Gruel, who *informs me you were barbarously murdered,*
and

and yet are in a fair way of recovery, is as unintelligible as a Dutch sybil, or an Irish prophet. Be as expeditious in the return of an answer as possible, and it will put an end to the disagreeable uncertainty of

FRANCIS DALTON.

L E T.

L E T T E R XIII.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

T O

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

Bath.

I Do not wonder you should be surprized at my last laconic epistle and ensuing silence, but I shall clear up what appears mysterious, by relating circumstantially several uncommon incidents which have lately taken up my whole attention, and occasioned my seeming neglect.

But

But it may, perhaps, be first necessary to congratulate you on your success, in so speedily discovering your mistress.

You entreat me to encourage your flame: I can, as yet, discover no reason to disapprove it, as you have drawn the young Lady, she appears very worthy of the most tender attachment; nor do I think from several circumstances the truth strained by your partiality, or the description exaggerated.

The violence of your affection is to be applauded, since its sensibility has

worked a reformation, which could not be effected by the influence of any passion less sublime than love; and what other passion can equal that :

- “ For by this only being God might raise,
- “ In lands of Atheists subsidies of praise,
- “ Since none did e’er so dull or stupid prove,
- “ But own’d a God, and felt his pow’r in love.

But if your passion did not meet with my entire approbation, I must confess myself not in a humour to remonstrate—I should make allowances, great allowances.

Perhaps, the alteration of my stile, as well as the place from which I date my letter may greatly surprize you.

But



But be attentive to my narrative, and
cease your admiration.

Business called me to Exeter, which
is about fifteen miles from Belmont
Lodge.

Returning towards the evening I
gave my horse the reins, and as he
ambled on, lost myself in the wander-
ings of fancy.

My thoughts were however suddenly
recalled by the report of a pistol; and
I felt myself wounded in the arm.

I had not time to perceive from whom I had received the injury. A blow upon the back part of my head brought me to the ground, and rendered me senseless.

I remained in this situation; I imagine from what I have since been told about two hours—But it was three days before I recovered my senses, as the wounds had thrown me into a fever, and rendered me delirious.

The rogues I have not heard of since, but they had entirely rifled my pockets. My loss I estimate at about fifty pounds.

VOL. I.

F

When

When my reflection returned I perceived I was in an elegant apartment ; but to whom it belonged was at a loss to conceive.

While I was ruminating, an elderly woman appeared ; the person who had been appointed to nurse me ; she drew gently towards the bed, and perceiving my eyes wide open, and my looks directed to her, she enquired how I did.

I replied tolerably—but continued, I should esteem it as a particular favor if you would inform me how I came here.

“ Came

“ Came here, Sir,” (said the old woman, shaking her head) “ Lard help
 “ you; you did not come here at all;
 “ you were brought here. Carrotty
 “ Tom, the Postillion, and little Ben-
 “ jamin, the Butler, brought you here
 “ —and such a spectacle eyes never
 “ beheld. Why, Sir, they found you
 “ stark murdered in the middle of the
 “ road”——

“ Murdered, Goody, why I am
 “ alive yet, thank God”——

“ Alive, Sir, ah! you are alive;
 “ things will hap that come: Mi-
 “ racles never cease. You were brought

“ to life again, indeed—but I say it,
 “ that should say it—that where Ger-
 “ trude Gruel is, no care is wanting
 “ —Nurses save lives, and Doctors
 “ are thanked for it: but things will
 “ be that are”——

Here I interrupted my talkative
 old attendant, as I perceived her lo-
 quacity and proverbs were directed to
 procure a reward for my resurrection,
 which she placed to her own account.
 I, therefore, asked her, if she could
 inform me where my cloaths were.

She immediately produced them ;
 upon searching, I found I had been
 completely plundered——

I intimated as much to the old woman.

“ Lard blefs us, and a-well-a-day !”
 faid ſhe, rather in confuſion, “ well, I
 “ hope the rogues will come to be
 “ hanged ! to add robbery to murder ;
 “ its a terrible world we live in. I
 “ was in hopes that leaving you in
 “ the condition they did, was the
 “ worſt of the matter.—I’m ſure, I
 “ never once offered to look into the
 “ cloaths ; thoſe I’ve had ’em in my
 “ care ſince here you’ve been—if
 “ they had been made of diamonds
 “ I’d ſcorn to ha’ touch’d ’em.”—

“ I do not doubt it, good Mrs.
 “ Gruel, but tho’ this accident has
 “ deprived me of what ready money I
 “ had about me, I shall take care to
 “ well reward your trouble and fide-
 “ lity.”

“ A thousand blessings on your
 “ heart, Sir, and if ever you should
 “ by such another untoward accident
 “ be murdered in such a shocking
 “ manner again, I hope you’ll have as
 “ much pains taken to bring you to
 “ yourself as I have taken.”

“ I’m oblig’d to you, but I hope I
 “ shall never have occasion to give
 “ you

“ you or any one so much trouble
 “ again. However, I must beg you’ll
 “ inform me whose house I’m in; for
 “ I’m certainly under great obligation
 “ to the person.”

“ Ah! Sir, the good Lady of this
 “ house, who order’d you to be taken
 “ the greatest care of, and sent for me
 “ to nurse you, is the best creature in
 “ all Devonshire, and half a dozen
 “ more counties to boot; she’s as
 “ fair as the flowers in May—such
 “ red and white—such a shape—as
 “ upright as a maypole: indeed, she’s
 “ a little proud now and then, and
 “ very often whimey; but *Ev’ry bean*

“ *bath its black*:—we have all our
 “ failings; some more; some less;
 “ the sun does not always shine; its
 “ often night; let those without stain
 “ throw the first stone——”

“ But, who is she, Nurse? What’s
 “ her name?”

“ Who is she, Sir?—Lard, Who
 “ shou’d she be but Lady *Beamwell*;
 “ her husband, Lord Beamwell, died
 “ about a twelvemonth since; he
 “ hadn’t much pleasure with his bride;
 “ well, God rest his soul, for if he’s
 “ in Heav’n he’s where ev’ry body
 “ wished

“ wished him many years ago. No-
 “ body mourn’d for him but my
 “ Lady, and she wept for joy, *an*
 “ *ounce of good luck is worth a pound of*
 “ *wisdom*; she has mountains of gold,
 “ and many good acres to comfort
 “ her; *but be that as it may, the last*
 “ *suitor may win the maid yet.* How-
 “ ever, that’s none of my business;
 “ for *those that walk in the sun may be*
 “ *tann’d at last——*”

This was the whole I heard at that
 time, for the clack of Goody Gruel
 operated, by the help of her proverbs,
 in the manner of a sleepy potion, and

lulled me into a very refreshing slumber, which continued for better than four hours, and did me infinite service.

BELMONT.

L E T.

LETTER XIV.

IN CONTINUATION OF THE
FOREGOING.

Bath—

WHEN the lady understood I was sensible, she sent a very polite message to me by one of her servants, whom I charged with a suitable return, bewailing the accident which at once obliged me to be so troublesome to her, and prevented me from personally paying my respects, as well as thanking her for her great hospitality and humanity.

F 6

From

From the loquacity of the nurse and the footman, who came to enquire after my health twice every day, I learned the outlines of this lady's history, which is somewhat singular, I shall therefore relate it.

She is the only daughter of a rich merchant, who, with a large fortune, a large share of pride, and a great deal of ill-nature, retired from business to live upon an estate he had purchased in this county, and to enjoy his spleen with less interruption, and more satisfaction to the malignity of his own disposition.

While

While he was immersed in business—though he had always been a bad husband—the multiplicity of his affairs prevented him from giving the full scope to his temper, and allowed some intervals of ease to his hapless consort, Mrs. Drawback; but as soon as he got into the country, time hung heavy upon his hands, and he found he had nothing else to do but to torment his wife; an employment extremely suitable to his infernal inclinations.

The poor woman having now the whole artillery of his malice to combat, very soon broke her heart, and
left

left him to seek out some new object on whom to exercise his diabolical talent.

His daughter, the lady in whose house I found myself after the accident already related, was, at the time of her mother's death, about seven years of age; she would, undoubtedly, have been the next sacrifice to the inhumanity of her parent's infernal temper, had not his ridiculous ambition befriended her.

He was one of those citizens, who, after having amassed immense wealth, even to superfluity, and enabled themselves

selves to purchase not only the comforts, but the luxuries of life, still remain dissatisfied—with the meanness common to their confined understandings, is combined a degree of pride that for ever urges them to vie with nobility, not in riches alone, but in dignity too—a title is the rock upon which such opulent citizens split—nay, in spite of avarice, they will forfeit even the fruits of their former industry for the airy blessing.

Mr. Drawback had but this one child, and was not likely to have any more—it was with him a determined point that she should marry nothing beneath

beneath a lord—her early years discovered so many charms, as seemed to presage that her maturer attractions might merit the first peer in the realm—nay, he had the ambition sometimes not to despair of being allied to a ducal coronet.

This disposition was favourable to the education of Miss Lydia. His avarice was subservient to his ambition, his heart and purse were open to her improvements—and her seventeenth year saw her one of the most accomplished young ladies in the kingdom.

It is true, she wanted a knowledge of the world—but a lady, who superintended

intended her education in the capacity of a governess, was perfectly acquainted with life, and a connoisseur in all that respected the *bon-ton*; from her she had imbibed such notions of the fashionable world, and such ideas of splendor, that she daily sighed to shine in a higher sphere, and figure in scenes which, from description, she fancied so ravishing.

A Mr. Melmoth, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, had frequently seen her—he was struck with her beauty—he admired—he loved her.

But

But her father's known disposition gave him the utmost despair—he suppressed his flame, and sighed in silence.

Some troops were quartered in the town—the officers gave a ball, to which all the neighbouring ladies were invited.

Mr. Drawback permitted his lovely daughter, accompanied by her governess, to be present.

To her own personal charms, and the bloom of youth, were added all the advantages of dress—she shone—she eclipsed all the ladies present, and
was

was triumphant over the hearts of the spruce brothers of the blade.

One of these capering hero's, named captain Tassell, was, perhaps, the most finished military coxcomb in the kingdom ; he had never seen real service, but was wonderfully great at reviews, those army puppet-shews—Upon these occasions, he piqued himself upon making the most elegant appearance of any officer in the regiment—he was a master of small talk—a connoisseur in dress, male and female—a distinguished master of the ceremonies—a critic at the toilet, and always shone with uncommon lustre at a tea-table.

If

If any officer who had been in actual service, by chance gave a description in his presence, of an action which, perhaps, did credit to the British arms, he was stigmatized as impolite, such things were improper to be mentioned in genteel company—if he accidentally made use of a military term, he was an unpolished savage, fit only to reside amongst the Cherokees or Catabaws.

In fine, in his own opinion, he was the most accomplished man in the kingdom, and his merits such that they must, of necessity, be irresistible—with the ladies.

This

This military sprig, who thought, in order to show his breeding, it was indispensable to fall in love with every fine woman he saw, now imagined it was incumbent upon him to carry off Miss Drawback for several reasons—because it would chagrin his brother-officers—because she was really handsome—and because she was heiress to an immense fortune—an article he was in no little want of.

The next morning he dressed, in order to wait upon Mr. Drawback, never once dreaming of a repulse.

He arrived at the house—was shewed into a parlour—The old gentleman

man appeared—and—but as the dialogue was very short, it is unnecessary to curtail it.

“ Hem ! hem ! Sir, your humble
“ servant. Sir, you have a daughter ;
“ I had the honour last night”——

“ Well, Sir”——

“ Well, Sir,—your most obedient,
“ Sir—Sir, please to conceive that I
“ bear his Majesty’s commission”——

“ And what then, Sir”——

“ Why then, Sir, it is very necessary
“ I should

“ I should be treated with respect—I
 “ merely wanted to intimate”——

“ Sir, I am intimately acquainted
 “ with what you want to intimate.
 “ After a great deal of circumlocution,
 “ and ceremonial absurdity, your
 “ meaning in plain English would
 “ appear to be, that you are an ex-
 “ travagant coxcomb; that you have
 “ spent ridiculously whatever you
 “ happened to possess; and now ha-
 “ ving nothing but a red coat, a tri-
 “ fling commission, perhaps mort-
 “ gaged, for I have known such things
 “ when I was in business, and a great
 “ deal of impudence left—you very
 “ modestly

“ modestly apply to me for an alliance
 “ with my daughter—I knew your
 “ meaning as soon as you began to
 “ put your mouth in form to speak—
 “ all you had to say was engraved
 “ upon that brazen countenance of
 “ yours—I have known cheats of
 “ every denomination—but cheats in
 “ red were always my utter aver-
 “ sion.”

“ Cheats, Sir!—Gad’s curse—old
 “ gentleman—I fancy I must”——

*[Laying his hand upon his sword,
 and cocking his hat.]*

“ Be calm—don’t be in a fever,
 “ young

“ young milkfop, it will spoil your
 “ complexion ; besides, my horse-
 “ pond may bring on the cold fit—it
 “ has a wonderful property at bring-
 “ ing on the ague—nay, don’t frown,
 “ I am not so much angry with you,
 “ as astonished at your impudence.
 “ My daughter would certainly have
 “ been a finer feather in your cap,
 “ than you ever yet wore—and a hun-
 “ dred thousand pounds would have
 “ given greater credit to your com-
 “ mission, than it at present bears—
 “ but——”

“ By the powers of beauty, Sir,
 “ this is insufferable—but I’ll tell you
 “ what, Sir——”

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“ Nay,

“ Nay, no fwaggering, young gen-
“ tleman, I can give commiffions as
“ well as his majesty ; I can com-
“ miffion my fervants to ufe their
“ horfe-whips with, I believe, greater
“ dexterity than you can your fword,
“ therefore no reply, good military
“ Sir, but march directly to your
“ quarters—or difcipline’s the word—
“ Here, Tom, Harry, you rafcals,
“ fee that gentleman on the other fide
“ the great gate, and if ever you fuf-
“ fer any rogue in red to come near
“ me again, I’ll cut your ears off, ye
“ heedlefs fcoundrels, I will.”

Terrified to the last degree by the old gentleman's threats, our hero scampered

scampered off, overwhelmed with shame and astonishment; but as his brother-officers knew of his visit, he resolved not to make them privy to his repulse.

A lie is both sword and shield to a coxcomb and a coward—of this weapon he therefore determined to avail himself. Adieu at present.

LETTER XV.

IN CONTINUATION OF THE
FOREGOING.

Bath—

MR. Melmoth, who had received an account from some of Mr. Drawback's family of the officer's reception, happened to be at the coffee-house, when captain Taffall first made his appearance after his repulse.

This coxcomb affected to appear very reserved, talked mysteriously, and frequently smiled to himself.

Some

Some of his brother officers enquired concerning his success.

He replied, things of consequence could not be done in a hurry, though he believed nobody could push an affair of importance more expeditiously than himself—the old gentleman was to be sure very whimsical, but he valued himself upon having a peculiar method of dealing with such people—the young lady had eyes, and seemed to be able to distinguish—her fortune was large to be sure, but his liberty was still more valuable—he did not know whether he should resign a thing so precious upon the present consider-

ations—his inclinations, he believed, might be indulged on less expensive terms——

The vanity and unparalleled impudence of this fop, with the villainy of his insinuations, inflamed Mr. Melmoth with indignation.——

His passion for Miss Drawback, together with a thorough conviction of the contempt with which the vain wretch had been treated, urged him to insist upon an explanation.

This the other, in a most insolent manner, peremptorily refused.

Mr.

Mr. Melmoth thought proper to call him out.

His cowardice was immediately painted in his face, for he never imagined a country gentleman would have had spirit enough to risk a rencounter with an officer.

He grinned, and would have turned it off as a jest, protesting that he meant nothing to the disadvantage of the lady, nor had any design to affront the gentleman.

Astonished at his mean behaviour, Mr. Melmoth told him, he was a

G 4

scandal

scandal to the army ; but though he was unworthy his sword, he should chastise him as a scoundrel.

So saying, he led him by the nose from the coffee-room to the street, and, after heartily caneing him, obliged him to confess himself an infamous liar and calumniator, upon his knees.

Laden with this disgrace, he thought proper to decamp from the town, to use his talents where his infamy was less known.

The affair made a great noise, but Mr. Melmoth reaped no benefit from his spirited conduct.

The

The lady, who knew her vindicator personally, beheld him only with esteem—a cold comfort to a warm lover.

But Mr. Drawback perceived two great faults in him—the want of a great title, and great estate.

As scandal is always general in her censures, which ill-nature takes care very particularly to apply, the officers belonging to the whole corps fell under the stigma of captain Tassall's disgrace—they could not but look upon the ridicule they underwent, as originating from Mr. Melmoth, though

G 5 the

the most thinking approved of his conduct. However, one who had more of the romantic than reasonable creature, or, in other words, more spirit than wit, thought it incumbent on him to wipe out the general stain—he challenged Mr. Melmoth.

This gentleman's unsuccessful passion rendered him careless of life—he accepted the challenge—they fought—and the officer fell a victim to his impetuosity.

Mr. Melmoth fled to France, where he remains, trying to conquer a hopeless passion, and to secure himself from a prosecution.

These

These incidents made a great noise. Miss Lydia Drawback became the most fashionable toast in the West of England. At length, the affair reached the ears of the Earl of Beamwell.

This nobleman had a mean person, a defective understanding, and was a slave to a complication of vices; however, he was of an ancient and noble family, possessed a title, had a large estate, and was first cousin to the prime minister.

From what he had heard of Miss Drawback's beauty, youth, accomplishments and fortune, he conceived the design of marrying her.

He fancied her blooming charms would suit admirably with his voluptuous inclinations—her youth he imagined would bless his declining years, and smooth his aged bed with pleasures—nor did he think much of permitting her to share his title, since he should have the full possession of her wealth and beauty.

He had been apprized of Mr. Drawback's disposition; and six dapple greys soon conveyed him to his house.

His title easily introduced him—
Negotiations between such parties, are
settled

fettled with much greater ease than between lovers, where both are too timid to reveal, what they have a desire each other shall know.

Mr. Drawback was not long in assenting to his Lordship's proposals, they were such as he had impatiently wished for—his daughter to be a Countess—delightful !

But to fill the measure of his happiness, Lord Beamwell had thrown in another sweetner ; he promised to use his utmost interest with his cousin, the minister, to obtain a peerage for Mr. Drawback himself.

This

This put him in raptures; he was enchanted with his Lordship, and every thing was ordered to be prepared to celebrate the nuptials with the utmost expedition.

Yet, though his ruling passion was so greatly flattered, he did not forget himself, nor the subordinate passions, to which he had been accustomed—he drove an excellent bargain for his daughter.

In the course of trade he had been so used to the idea of advantage in all his dealings, that he could not forget it in this treaty; to obtain one title,
and

and be allied to another, he had, indeed, agreed to give with his daughter, a hundred thousand pounds, but insisted that the nuptials should not take place, unless that sum, with a considerable estate besides, was settled upon her, as a jointure; the whole to be solely at her disposal, in case of his Lordship's decease, and subject to no deductions, or payments whatever.

During the whole negotiation, the young Lady was never once consulted, but when the whole was resolved on, she was ordered to prepare for her nuptials on such a day.

She

She had seen his Lordship several times, and loathed him—

She had conversed with him, and despised his intellects—

She, therefore, resolved to remonstrate——

N. B. The rest by the next post.

LET-

LETTER XVI.
IN CONCLUSION OF THE
FOREGOING.

Bath.

MISS Lydia Drawback desired to speak to her father privately——

She was ordered into his presence ;— upon her tender knees, and with her lovely eyes brimful of tears, exhibiting the figure of suppliant beauty in sorrow, she made use of all her rhetoric to unsettle his purpose, and set aside the treaty.

But in vain——

He

He was inflexible——

She entreated him to consider, that in the most important affair, which could concern her; she had not been allowed the privilege of a negative; or even consulted upon the occasion——

“ Consulted,” cried he, in a passion,
 “ Why, what was I to consult you
 “ about; don’t I know better what’s
 “ good for you than you do yourself;
 “ have not I had more experience,
 “ and consequently must have more
 “ wisdom; I’ve considered the thing
 “ sufficiently,

“ sufficiently,—its resolved on, so you
“ may rest contented.——

“ But, dear Sir, reflect a little with
“ a parent’s tenderness, that my whole
“ future happiness depends upon this
“ step;—have some regard to the hap-
“ piness of a child, who never even in
“ thought offended you.

“ Zounds, I think the girl’s mad;
“ why, have not I consider’d your
“ happiness sufficiently? Are you not
“ going to be married to a Lord?”

“ Yes, Sir, but I may be unhappy
“ —What with a Lord?

“ Reflect,

“ Reflect, Sir, on the disparity of
“ years.—Reflect, girl, on the title—

“ Consider, Sir, the disagreeableness
“ of his person.”

“ Consider, Child, he’s a Lord ;
“ —the girl’s bewitch’d—not admire
“ a Lord ! I thought all young Ladies
“ had been doatingly fond of Lords.
“ Is not his blue ribbon a pretty orna-
“ ment :—you’re very fond of blue
“ ribbons to adorn yourself ; and
“ what’s the matter a blue ribbon
“ should not set off one sex as well as
“ the other ; besides, its a badge of
“ honor with him ; it carries an air of
“ dignity with it : and his star too,
“ didn’t you observe the noble appear-
“ ance of his star ; how it twinkled—

“ Aye

“ Aye—why hussey, its set with diamonds.”

“ But what are ribbons and stars,
“ Sir, to peace of mind and happiness?”

“ What are they, Girl; why, the
“ very soul of them ;—you ungracious
“ girl, if you had a right notion of
“ things, you’d know that ribbons
“ and stars are the very foundation of
“ happiness.”

“ Sir, will you permit me to mention one more objection.”

“ Take

“ Take care, huffey, to let it be a
“ reasonable one.”—

“ Under submission then, Sir, to
“ your superior judgment; I think—
“ I beg your pardon, Sir—but I really
“ think, my Lord but little better
“ than an ideot; and fure, you would
“ not have me united with a fool”—

“ A fool—the girl’s stark mad, by
“ all that’s lunatic;—why, its totally
“ impossible, huffey; he’s worth thirty
“ thousand a year; how can he be a
“ fool then?”—

Hearing fuch convincing arguments,
the young Lady quitted her suppliant
posture,

posture, in which she had continued the whole time, and retired without making the least reply.

Her manner of departure alarmed her father, who being naturally of a suspicious temper, thought her silent departure, an implication of some sinister design. He immediately followed her; locked her up; and ordered, that she should be strictly guarded and watched.—

On the morning of the day appointed for the nuptials, he dispatched to her a card, containing as follows :

“ Daughter,

“ Daughter, prepare to obey me
 “ chearfully, or prepare to be disin-
 “ herited, and turn’d out of doors
 “ immediately. You know my reso-
 “ lution.”

To this severe message, the young
 Lady sent this reply :

“ Sir,

“ I know my duty—your pleasure
 “ shall be done—I am all implicit
 “ obedience.”

This compliable answer so de-
 lighted Mr. Drawback, that he imme-
 diately sent a fine pair of diamond
 ear-rings, as a present to his daughter,

to wear upon the occasion, with the following

C A R D.

“ Good Girl—wear those ear-rings
 “ —dress yourself as elegantly as
 “ possible—shine—be a Lady, and be
 “ happy.”

At the appointed time, my Lord appeared as fine as every thing rich, and ornamental could make him; indeed, the very worst thing about him was himself; he had a splendid equipage, and a numerous retinue.

The Priest attended; nothing was wanted but the presence of the young Lady.

Every one's thoughts were upon her—every one knew the match to be disagreeable to her.

At once to ease their doubts, and still more astonish them, she appeared, adorned by the richest attire, which seemed but as a foil to set off her beauty; she was drest with the utmost elegance, and every thing about her disposed with the greatest taste; but what was most surprizing, she seemed quite

quite gay, chearful, and even pleased
with her fate——

Her father was delighted——

My Lord was quite in raptures,

And ——

The ceremony was performed.—

All seemed joy and festivity ; a noble
banquet was prepared ; the company
were seated ; the Peer in the highest
spirits to have such a lovely wife, and
the father in raptures to behold his
daughter a *Countess* ; for the old
Gentleman had taken care to have all
the writings properly signed, sealed,
and delivered—every thing was se-
cure.

H 2

But

But as the affairs of this world are subject to sudden changes, an accident happened, which threw the company into the utmost consternation.

The Peer, who was naturally intemperate, being exhilarated to an uncommon pitch, upon the occasion, and having toasted his lovely bride in full bumpers of the richest wines, untill he was in a state of intoxication; his spirits were all afloat—his raptures occasioned too great a perturbation of mind; his years were too many, his nature too weak to support the excess; he was seized with an apoplectic fit;
 he

he sunk from his chair to the ground,
and in a few moments expired.

Thus the young Lady became in
one day, a wife—a Countess—a wi-
dow ; and still remained a virgin.

The company departed ; the Peer
was soon after buried with great pomp ;
the newly allied family put on mourn-
ing, and the blooming dowager, a beau-
ty—a maiden Countess, and in possession
of a princely fortune, soon after repaired
to Beamwell hall, the noble seat, where
my life was so hospitably faved, and
which was part of her jointure.

Such is the history of my kind host-
 ells. I have been circumstantial for
 several reasons; and in my next shall
 be more particular about myself.

BELMONT.

L E T.

LETTER XVII.
FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT
TO
FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

Bath—

WHILE I remained at Beamwell hall, I sent for my steward, and properly rewarded the two servants, who so providentially found me, and were the means of saving my life, as well as my good talkative nurse, who attended me with great care and tenderness.

H 4

When

When my health was sufficiently re-established to admit of my paying my respects to the Lady; I signified by her servant, that I wished to have an opportunity of personally testifying my gratitude, for the great favors I had experienced in her house.

She returned an obliging answer.

I waited upon her——

I had from the report of the servants been taught to expect to see a beauty.

But she exceeded, far exceeded, whatever their feeble expressions could pretend

pretend to describe ; or, indeed, what I had ever in my life seen ; or imagined did exist.

Our compliments were suitable to the occasion ;—it is needless to trouble you with them ; and the conversation became more general.

To all the bounties which Nature can bestow, this lady seems to have received all the embellishments, which Art is able to give.

Her understanding is sublime, her wit entertaining, her genius penetrating ; and her manners elegant.

H 5

In

In short, Frank, as she is the first woman I could ever think compleat, she is the first that could ever engross my attention.

Thus your once philosophical friend can find no refuge in his own maxims, the Philosophy of Love is the most powerful of any ; his principles are innate, and his arguments irresistible ; he convinces without reason, and is tyrannic without provocation ; he binds us in filken chains, which are stronger than those of iron, he gives us pleasures which torment us, and pains we would not part from. In fine, Love is a riddle, which all are doomed to feel,

feel, though none are able to expound
—an unaccountable being, who plunges
us in ten thousand anxieties, yet, we
fancy him

“The cordial drop, Heav’n in our cup has
thrown,

“To make this nauseous draught of life go
down;

Yet, my friend, I confess I love—
love to distraction; this is the reason,
why I informed you I should have
been very kind to any failings which
the blind God might have induced you
to commit—we are equally culpable;
we must not correct each other.

I have taken leave of Aristotle,
Plato, Bacon, and other respectable
Ancients and Moderns: I converse
with none but Ovid, Cowley, and
Waller; they are to me the most
sublime philosophers at present.

Yet, I have not revealed my pas-
sion to the Lady: I mean, by words;
but if she is able to read glances,
tremblings, hesitations, and the whole
of the silent language of love, she
must by this time be perfectly ac-
quainted with the secrets of my
heart.

Sometimes

Sometimes too, the vanities, the dross of the world, make me shudder ; her title is far superior to mine, though my fortune is not inconsiderable, her's is much larger.—These, these are bars my friend.

If I dropt the least tender expression, she would affect not to understand me ; if I was particular, she was reserved ; but if I slid into familiarity, she was all spirits.

As it was not decent for me to remain long in her house after my health was restored ; I took my leave.

But

But I retained a servant of her's in my interest; one of the men who found me in that dangerous condition in the road, just for the sake of a little intelligence.

Just as I had settled some affairs at home, which were in confusion from my absence, this man sent me information, that his Lady's time of mourning being expired, she was determined on visiting Bath, to launch into gayer scenes than she had hitherto been personally acquainted with.

Love, like the attraction of loadstone to steel, draws us whither he pleases;

pleases ; I could not resist the impulse to follow her.

This journey was the occasion of my laconic epistle to you, and of my letters being dated from this place.

She is complaisant, but not particular to me.—Patience, a very necessary virtue in a lover, is the only piece of my former philosophy which I have left.

In spite of her understanding, she is immoderately fond of dissipation, every kind of amusement has charms for her : All the time she can spare from

from the rooms, or attending places of public diversion, is appropriated to paying and receiving visits—cards, &c.

These are not the only grievances; she has either in reality, or affectedly, commenced coquet.—All the fops in the place, attracted by her beauty, title, and fortune are continually buzzing about her; and what is worse, she seems pleased with their assiduities.

Yet I love her—fondly love her, and even doat upon her follies; nay, I admire the very things which render her the most ridiculous; so blind, so inconsistent is love.

The

The poet says,

“ The proverb holds, that to be wise and love,
“ Is hardly granted to the Gods above.

And from what I am going to say, I
imagine I shall not only be deemed
unwise, but even in a downright state
of distraction.

But I write to one who is sensible
of, who feels the passion, and will
consequently allow for the contradic-
tions, the incongruities in sentiment,
which it occasions.

Be attention —

Then,

Then, if this beauty, who is blest with every gift of nature, and adorned with every embellishment of art, would wave the disparity of title and fortune, would immediately renounce every folly, every kind of dissipation for my sake, and present me with her hand ; *I would refuse it.*

Even you may think this unaccountable, and deem me a strange fellow ;—yet, I repeat, all charming as she is, *I would refuse to accept her.*

I know you think me mad ; but I have a Scruple—a Delicate Objection—there—there's the rub.——

Perhaps

Perhaps you will say, why the devil then do you follow her?

I will give you a lover's reason, Frank, because I can't help it—I am borne away by an irresistible impulse—I don't follow her, I am forced to her.

This you will say is strange, to be desperately in love with, and follow a beautiful, young, accomplished dowager—a virgin widow, with a title—rich—at her own disposal—and one who had been so kind, so hospitable to me; yet if she would be partial enough to condescend to bless me
above

above my deserts—to grant the full scope of my desires—I should refuse to marry her—Strange, indeed !

It is very true, Frank, but facts are facts, the thing is so—It is strange—but love occasions many strange things.

I think I once told you, that love should never make me ridiculous—I remember I did—but recollect, that was before I knew what love was.

You will, perhaps, tell me, I reasoned very tolerably upon the passion at that time.

May

May be so—but it was only *speculative love* that employed my imagination then—I now feel the passion in its full force—I feel it *practically*—I then fancied love could do great things—I now find he can do more than I ever dreamed of—I then thought of love as a philosopher, I now feel it as a man.

I adore the Countess of Beamwell—I shall never be happy without possessing her—yet never will possess her—this is to be sure paradoxical—but I have an objection—a Delicate Objection.

L E T.

LETTER XVIII.
FROM MISS GRINLY
TO
LADY BEAMWELL.

DEAR LYDIA,

London—

SINCE you insist upon my still
addressing you with that affectionate
familiarity, you need not doubt of my
sincerity, when I assure you, that no-
thing could have given me greater
pleasure, than to hear of your health
and welfare.

I felicitate you on your elevation in life ; not that I think rank, or fortune, can make any impression on a mind like yours, but as they contribute in giving you greater ability to indulge a humane and feeling temper.

Indeed, it is to me a great happiness, to revive that sincere and pleasing friendship, which in our early years we conceived for each other at the boarding-school.

To parents there is certainly a great respect due ; but I think you extremely fortunate in being freed from the domestic tyranny of one, who, (excuse me)

me) is hardly worthy of such a daughter; but you are doubly happy in being freed at so critical a juncture from a man, your heart and understanding must have obliged you to despise.

You certainly could not be mistaken in your conjectures concerning Sir James Belmont's passion—the symptoms were too evident.

That he must hear you were gone to Bath is reasonable to suppose, and that he would follow you is as feasible to conjecture.

But

But that an affected indifference would rivet his chains, and being seemingly fond of follies you really despise, would prove the sincerity of his passion, I cannot so clearly perceive.

I am all submission to your superior judgment, but in my poor opinion, the heart is a very ticklish thing, and experiments which run counter to discretion extremely dangerous.

Instead of rivetting his chains, your apparent follies may alarm him too much, and your indifference drive him to despair; and you know desperation

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has

has caused many prisoners to break from confinement.

With respect to my own situation, my papa is as unsocial as ever, and my mama as fond of amusements, but she is in every other respect so amiable a woman, and so good a parent, that I chearfully comply with her desire in visiting many fashionable places, from which my inclination would prompt me to be absent—nay, I often entreat her permission to go, and beg her to accompany me, knowing that the first proposal coming from me, would, to her, prove the most agreeable.

We

We are frequently visited by a Mr. Dalton, a gentleman we accidentally met with at Mr. Bronzure's the painter, and to whom my mama thought proper to give an invitation.

My mama had a desire to be at the last Masquerade—I perceived it, and insinuated that I had an inclination to go—she was pleased at my having anticipated the motion——Diana was the character I chose.

A Mask in a plain domino followed us the whole evening, and was extremely particular in his assiduities.

My mamma was alarmed, and we took an opportunity to slip away.

I since find this very Mask, is the identical Mr. Dalton who visits us !—

He is acquainted at Mr. Bronzure's; my mamma was so pleased with my appearance in the character of Diana, that she would have me drawn in that dress.

In the course of calling at Mr. Bronzure's, to see how he went on, we met Mr. Dalton, and he seemed to receive my mamma's invitation with pleasure.

I can't

I can't think he knocks at our door as a common acquaintance—he is too particular—from several circumstances, I cannot help placing his visits to my account——

You will be inclined to know, if he has made any impression on your friend——

I think—no——

He is a gentleman of family, fortune, and character, and seems, by nature and education, to possess every accomplishment necessary to render him amiable—yet to me he is indifferent.

I 3

I find

I find he is rather a libertine, but in that his own good sense may reform him.

I must confess, that from what little observation I have ever made on the sex, I think him more agreeable than any I have ever yet met with—but that's nothing—we fancy many things agreeable to the imagination, which make no impression upon the heart; so that my affections are entirely my own, and I am entirely yours,

FRANCES GRINLY.

L E T.

LETTER XIX.

FROM LADY BEAMWELL

TO

MISS GRINLY,

AMIALE FANNY,

Bath—

I HAVE confest my prepossession in favour of Sir James Belmont ; and the methods I intend to pursue ; though my dear friend does not coincide with me ; yet I could give her sufficient reasons for my conduct, however, suffice it to say, that I would wish to try him to the utmost. If he is alarmed

without occasion, I shall be confirmed in his being of a suspicious temper; a temper that I above all others dislike: I may be particular, but I would rather be witlessly particular, than wilfully unhappy.

I would have the man with whom I am destined to pass my life, willing to overlook, nay, incapable of seeing any blemish in my person, or foible in my understanding, he should be blind to every thing which did not border upon criminality; I would have him

“ To my virtues very kind,

“ To my faults a little blind,

And I will add, indulgent too.

Consider,

Consider, my dear, before the indissoluble knot is tied, what allowances are made in our favor: but when once that is over, men do not think us altogether so faultless; we are no longer angels. Women are mortals—and mortals must have faults—they watch all our actions; they scrutinize our conduct with the utmost severity; and lay in wait to catch our follies, while every little foible is magnified above its real size, in proportion to their former incredulity of believing us capable of committing any.

Then how cautious ought we to be beforehand; how careful to secure

a retreat for our own deficiencies, in the easiness of their tempers or goodness of their hearts. Consider, our charms will not always last, nor while they do last, be equally powerful.

“Beauty soon grows familiar to the lover,

“Fades in his eye, and palls upon the sense”

Then is it not a piece of necessary prudence, by exhibiting more follies than we really have, to make sure of a reversion of indulgence for those we do possess, and to win the whole stock of their good-nature over to our party, while it is in our power, as well as to try their patience to the utmost, in order to know its full extent.

Policy

Policy is as necessary in love-affairs
as in state-affairs.

But not to be tedious, I wish your
mamma would conceive a design of
taking a trip to Bath.—I long to em-
brace you.—Do, my dear, put such a
scheme forward.

I believe you are as much mine as
you are able to be.—But as for your
affections being yours, I beg your
pardon.—

Your heart betrays you, and Mr.
Dalton peeps through your indiffer-

ence very plainly, and informs me, you are not quite so unconcerned as you fancy yourself—

You hesitate too much to be cool, and deny your being affected too earnestly not to have received the infection—

Probe the wound to the quick—examine yourself closely—Tell me how you are when Mr. Dalton is present.

And tell me how you are when he is absent—

And

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And how you are waking,

And who you dream about sleeping
—Write, however, to &c.

BEAMWELL.

L E T.

LETTER XX.

FROM FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

T O

SIR JAMES BELMONT.

BELMONT,

London—

I AM all impatience to open my mind to Miss Grinly, but cannot gain an opportunity; I often visit there; the mother preserves a decent politeness, the daughter a modest reserve.

But I want to come to an eclaircissement, which the old lady, who watches
the

the young one with the eyes of Argus, assiduouſly prevents. I could be very angry with her, if ſhe had not given birth to ſuch an angelic being as her amiable daughter.

So ſtand my affairs at preſent—now for yours——

Your laſt letter is a perfect riddle, which I beg you will explain in your next.

I can't think what your objection to the lady can be—your conduct is quite paradoxical.

I hope your Delicate Objection is not a sentimental piece of absurdity, built upon modern refinement ; a vapour of the head formed by your own ingenuity, to make your heart unhappy---for

“ Some have too much wisdom to be happy.”

Do not be too delicate ; do not let any romantic idea supersede a real blessing, nor suffer an imaginary notion of unexisting perfection to be your perpetual punishment. Let me hear from you soon, and believe me to be

Yours, &c.

DALTON.

L E T-

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LETTER XXI.
FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT
TO
FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK,

Bath—

I Don't wonder that you should be surprized at my last epistle. It must, indeed, appear enigmatical ; but I shall here solve the difficulty, and explain my meaning.

You know I informed you, that lady Beamwell was greatly averse to an union with her late lord ; yet, when matters

matters were brought to a crisis, she patiently submitted, or, indeed, rather cheerfully complied.

What am I to think of this compliance ? Was it an implicit obedience to her father's commands ? or,

Was she allured by the glare of a title, a splendid equipage, and a profusion of wealth ? or,

Was it to get free from her father's domestic tyranny, to be more her own mistress, and to launch forth less liable to observation and censure, into those gay scenes of dissipation which she seems so much to admire.

If

If the first—She who to a father's unjust commands, could sacrifice her own future happiness, would, when once freed from the disagreeable trammels which she had been obliged implicitly to obey, be intoxicated with her new acquired liberty, and sacrifice my happiness to any sudden whim, or predominant desire; those who can give up every future consideration for a little present ease, would, to gratify a ruling passion, pay but small attention to another's satisfaction.

If the second—Reason induced her. It denotes a littleness of mind, and narrowness of understanding, which,
to

to a thinking man, must appear very disagreeable.

But if she was biased by my third supposition (and it is probable she was, since she does not appear of a temper sufficiently humble to have submitted to the first, or of an understanding sufficiently weak to have been misled by the second) it is much more alarming; to be so totally devoid of sentiment as to resign every delicate consideration for a little momentary ease, and the indulgence of a few favourite follies.

Thus,

Thus, in whatever point of view I behold her marriage, it shocks my Delicacy.

It is true, Providence interposed, and snatched her husband from a consummation which appeared truly unnatural.

But her culpability remains—she, in mind, submitted even to consummation—there's the rub—for she could not possibly foresee its prevention—the sacrifice was made on her part, fate prevented the completion on his.

This is my Objection ; you, surely, cannot think it too Delicate, unless
you

you hold that love is seated in the blood, rather than in the soul. Be it as it will, I am distracted with passion, yet a slave to Scruples of Sentiment. I never can think of an union with her, yet cannot bear the thought of depriving myself of her-dear presence ; this is my present situation ; I have an objection to her manner of thinking, an impeachment of her delicacy, yet I have ten thousand objections against quitting the pursuit of her.

“ A thousand things affect a lover’s mind,
 “ For which another can’t a reason find ;
 “ And tho’ the universe should deem him
 “ wrong,
 “ Still his excuses to himself are strong.”

You

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You are now acquainted with the
conflict which subsists in the breast of
the distracted

BELMONT.

LET.

LETTER XXII.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

TO

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANCIS,

Bath.—

BESIDES an innumerable train of follies, I have no less than five profest rivals—a modern macaroni—an antiquated beau—a parrot—a monkey—and a lap-dog.—The last three are certainly the most reasonable animals of the five, as they act according to their nature; but the two former are more talkative than a par-

I

rot,

rot, more mischievous than a monkey,
and have much less sagacity than a
lap-dog.

Yet I'm obliged to be complaisant
to the two coxcombs; to praise the
conversation of the parrot, applaud
the beauty of the lap-dog, and ad-
mire the tricks of the monkey.

A painful slavery, you'll allow. But
I have been reduced by the tyrant
Love to situations as truly ridiculous
and humiliating. 'Twas love made
Hercules learn to spin, changed Ju-
piter into a bull, and lost Mark An-

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K

thony

thony the world; for, as the poet
shews,

“ All are fools or lovers first or last.”

For,

“ The proverb holds, that to be wise and love,

“ Is hardly granted to the Gods above.”

Then, I hope, none will expect me to
be wiser than the Gods themselves.

You will, doubtless, think me ex-
tremely inconsistent. All men are so
in some degree; and if I'm guilty of
more folly than my neighbours, I
can't help it—

A sudden

A sudden interruption from a gentleman, who called upon me, and took me out; but it was productive of some droll circumstances.

I shall relate them.

One of my rivals, the macaroni, happened to be at a coffee-house, to which my friend induced me to go.

He was playing himself off—Every part of his dress became the object of his own admiration, in order to excite that of others.

Being in the full view of a pier-glass, all his effeminate features, with

K 2

their

the exterior embellishments, appeared to have absorbed his whole attention, and, without condescending to regard any other person in the room, he seemed to observe himself with a singular complacency.

Mr. Gilliflower, for such is the name of this sprig of modern refinement, sometimes smirked to himself, then smiled at his shadow in the glass, gave a hem!—then casting a glance at his lily white hand, ornamented by the lustre of a fine diamond ring, he simpered insignificantly; at length he took a pinch of Orangerie, that the display might be greater; this
caused

caused him to sneeze, and, in a squeaking voice, to bring out a *Gad's Curse*. At which critical instant, a brother coxcomb by chance entered the room, and hearing the expression, emphatically cried *Amen*. This curious specimen of macaroni wit was scarce uttered, when both the puppies laughed most immoderately.

I had scarce patience to bear their impertinence.

And a few moments more quite exhausted my whole stock of patience.

The coxcomb Gilliflower, began to boast of his intimacy with Lady Beam-

well, and of the favourable opinion she entertained of his merits, in such direct and gross terms, as could not fail to give his auditors an unfavourable opinion of both the Lady's understanding and reputation; and what is still more provoking, the other coxcomb, though in fact he had never seen the Lady in his life, confirmed by oath all that his brother puppy had the impudence to assert.

I lost all patience.

I asked him, if he dared maintain his infamous assertions.

He

He replied, he did DARE, at any time, and in any place, and upon all occasions.

I told him, I was glad of it, as no time appeared so eligible as the present, while the occasion was recent in the mind; and that it was an easy matter to adjourn to a proper place.

He changed colour—and began to alter his note, by replying, that he knew of no such extreme precipitancy necessary upon such occasions; that calmness was the only sign of true courage, and that he always chose to act with a philosophical coolness, as

he did not love to incommode himself with trifles.

I informed him, that he must either walk out with me, or put me under a necessity of proceeding in a more concise, though, perhaps, less agreeable manner.

He returned, that he was not disposed to walk, and should not act contrary to his own inclinations, to gratify the desire of any man existing.

His affected *non chalenge*, and dissembled composure, excited at once my contempt and indignation.—I
stepped

stepped to the box in which he sat, and taking his nose between my fingers, led him to the door.

His companion honoured me with the epithet of *Brute*, which I resented by serving him exactly in the same manner.

They had just sensibility sufficient to feel such a public affront, and modesty enough left to retire from Bath with great precipitation.

The affair became the conversation of the day at all the card tables; consequently Lady Beamwell must soon

have been acquainted with it : yet she has not given me the least room to imagine she is acquainted with such a circumstance, but behaves to me in the very same manner that she did prior to the transaction.

She is a perfect enigma ; I shall not here attempt to account for effects, the cause of which cannot be traced ; but remain,

Your cordial friend,

BELMONT.

LETTER XXIII.

FROM SIR JAMES BELMONT,

TO

FRANCIS DALTON, ESQ.

DEAR FRANK,

Bath—

IN a place of continual amusement and dissipation, I am here an uneasy spectator of the follies of others. All the company seem to fancy they were born only for pleasure. The gratification of their passions and appetites are their only pursuits; and they appear so eager to murder time and break

K 6

their

their constitutions, that a reasonable person would swear they are possessed by some epidemic disorder which perpetually stimulates them to all that is preposterous.

The real libertine is the *Child of Pain*, instead of the enjoyer of real pleasure—he pursues excess in lieu of satisfaction, and in the room of that felicity which he so ardently wishes for, can only now and then catch a transitory amusement; for it generally happens that he is stung by disappointment, ruined by extravagance, tortured by disease, and tormented by a bad conscience. Thus his fancied pleasures

pleasures end in actual pains, and the
fervor of his pursuits only lead him to
disgust ; well may the Poet sing,

“ Pleasure but cheats us with an empty

“ name,

“ Still seems to vary, yet is still the same ;

“ Amusements, all its utmost skill can boast ;

“ By use it lessens, and in thought is lost.

“ The youth that riots, and the age that

“ hoards,

“ Folly that sacrifices things to words.

“ Pride, wit, and beauty in one taste agree,

“ 'Tis sensual, or 'tis mental luxury ;

“ Sad state of nature, doom'd to future pain,

“ Something to wish and want but never

“ gain.

“ Restless we live, and disappointed die

“ Unhappy,

- " Unhappy, yet we know not how, or why;
 " Reason perhaps may lend her gen'rous
 " aid,
 " Reason, who never yet her trust betray'd;
 " Can she direct us in the doubtful strife?
 " Can she conduct us through the maze of
 " life?
 " To human reason then from weakness
 " free,
 " Partakes she not of our infirmity?
 " Alas! experience but too plainly shews
 " That man can act against the truths he
 " knows.
 " By custom led, or by allurements won,
 " Discern those evils which he cannot
 " shun."

Excuse this long extract, but the
 lines are so extremely beautiful, that I
 could

could not resist an inclination to transcribe them.

Thus are poor mortals deluded in what they are most solicitous to obtain. If we are disappointed in what we pursue with too great a propensity, we become miserable. If we arrive at the enjoyment of what we seek, we lose the bliss in the fruition, the pleasure palls upon our too long expecting appetite, or does not come up to the idea we conceived during the pursuit.— Thus our sanguine hopes, our most ardent desires, when not gratified, are sure to torment us, and when gratified to the utmost, to give us no real satisfaction ;

faction ; desires encrease upon desires ;
we fight for something still unpossessed,
and that something, as the poet says,

“ Corrodes and leavens all the rest.”

Therefore, those whose passions are by
nature subservient to the guidance of
reason, rather those who are not under
the influence of any strong passions,
who can curb their desires, and be moderate in their pursuits are the best calculated to enjoy as much felicity as this sublunary state of things will admit.

Such are not the people who resort to
Bath—they seem all solicitous to obtain
pleasures, they are all violent in their
pursuits, and though they may often
appear

appear pleased, I will continue to affirm, they are never really happy.—Nay, I dare avouch, that take a hundred of the merriest faces in Bath, and a hundred simple nymphs and swains from the neighbouring villages, that upon a scrutiny into the real sentiments of their hearts, the rural troop will be found to have greatly the advantage in point of real happiness.

Amidst all these scenes of genteel riot—this polite bustle of amusement—I am a prey to the most mortifying melancholy.—Pursuing the substance with unremitting avidity; when, if I should prove successful, my temper would

would absolutely deny me the fruition of what my assiduities might deserve, and compel me to be content with the shadow only.

Thus critically, or rather whimsically situated, my passion may be truly termed equivocal.—I wish for what I dread to obtain, and desire what I should not dare to taste.—Strange inconsistencies!——But love deals in riddles.——

You think I carry my Sentimental Scruple too far; it may be so—perhaps in my theory of love I have refined too much—and a heart like mine,

mine, abounding with such nice peculiarities, may not easily arrive at happiness, I allow—but you must grant, that if no such Delicate Objection existed—if every scruple was fully satisfied—that my soul is capable of receiving a more sublime degree of happiness, a more enraptured pleasure than such as are less nice.

Nor ought I to be accused of being too particular.—I wish we were less tenacious of copying our polite neighbours the French, in being *toute degagé*, and spurning that celestial maid Decency.—I wish the most minute Delicacy was diffused in every British breast,
and

and not confined to few, who like myself, may be deemed singularly absurd.

In Turkey, this heavenly emanation is not only constitutional in a few, but even a national characteristic; for, if we may credit Monsieur Tournefort, physicians for the secret maladies of the female sex, would in that country have no practice.—Would to heaven a similar Delicacy was prevalent in England!

“ When I was brought into the
 “ Grand Signior’s Seraglio (says the
 “ above mentioned learned traveller)
 “ in the character of a physician, I
 “ was not a little surprized in looking
 “ along:

“ along a gallery, to see a great num-
 “ ber of naked arms standing out from
 “ the sides of the room.

“ I could not imagine what this
 “ could mean, till I was informed,
 “ those arms belonged to bodies which
 “ I must cure, without knowing any
 “ more about them than what I could
 “ learn from the arms: I was not al-
 “ lowed to ask a question of the pa-
 “ tient, or even of her attendants, lest
 “ I should find it necessary to enquire
 “ concerning circumstances, which
 “ the Delicacy of the Seraglio permits
 “ not to be revealed.

“ Hence

“ Hence the physicians in the eastern countries pretend to know all diseases by the pulse, as quacks in Europe pretend to cure people merely from seeing their urine.”

A certain writer remarks upon this passage, that if *Monf. Tournefort* had been a quack of that kind, that it is a query whether at *Constantinople*, he would have been allowed by the jealous Turk, the liquid necessary for exercising his art, though the life of a favourite mistress had depended on it, while we let every quack handle our wives and daughters as freely as butchers do their cattle.

Thus

Thus we may perceive that Delicacy is a natural inmate of the human breast, since it flourishes among a rude people, in other respects uncultivated in their minds and brutal in their manners.—Yet in the humble and servile imitation of French fopperies and French fashions, we have not only got rid of almost every social virtue, but of that sublime, that attractive delicacy, which may justly be admired as the greatest mental embellishment, and with propriety termed the *neatness of the soul*.

With Swift let me exclaim,

“ O Decency! celestial maid!

“ Descend from Heaven to beauty’s aid.”

I am

I am as mad with love as ever—I am determined to pursue Lady Beamwell with the most punctual assiduity and unwearied diligence, even to the very verge of compliance; and then, in the full view of happiness, such is my fate, I shall fall a martyr to my
DELICATE OBJECTION.

BELMONT.

End of the First Volume.